

2.2 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains to the Minister for Economic Development regarding the Western Tanker Berth Gangway:

Would the Minister inform Members whether the Western Tanker Berth Gangway has malfunctioned since its installation and, if so, on how many occasions; what has been the cost of remedying any faults, and what has been the cost of supplying alternative cover while it has been unserviceable?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (The Minister for Economic Development):

Deputy Maclean has specific responsibility as Assistant Minister for Harbours and I would like him to be able to answer the question.

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean of St. Helier (Assistant Minister for Harbours):

Thank you, Sir. The gangway concerned is a complex piece of equipment designed to automatically adjust itself to follow the rise and fall of the tide. It also incorporates a further manual adjustment. As is the case with complex mechanical systems they are prone to the odd fault. Since the new gangway was installed in 2002, there have been 10 recorded malfunctions; one of these was caused by a ship. There have been some other very minor faults but these have been rectified during the normal course of the working day. The maximum cost of repair to a fault has been £143. A further £150 has been payable for the provision of a lifeboat to be tied up beside the moored ship in order to meet Health and Safety Regulations. These state that there must be an alternative form of pedestrian access or egress. Since the new gangway was installed there has been no loss of service due to malfunction and 238 tankers have successfully used the facility.

2.2.1 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Thank you, Sir. I wonder if I could just clarify a couple of matters with the Assistant Minister. I find the figure of - I did a quick calculation - £15 a time for provision of a lifeboat extremely reasonable. I do not know if that figure is correct. He did refer to the piece of equipment - the gangway - being a complex piece of equipment. Could he advise us as to why the department does not resort to the original type of equipment, which was extremely simple and gave no trouble for many, many years until it wore out eventually, and to be replaced by something which seems to be permanently going wrong? It last went wrong just about a week or so ago, Sir.

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:

Yes, the use of the lifeboat: up until January 2005 it was £150 for each time it was used. Since then a contract has been put in place, which includes a number of other facilities and services of which the lifeboat is included within that and is believed to be far more cost effective. As far as the complexity of this piece of equipment: at the time that it was selected by a previous Committee, the competitive tender process was entered into. Five or 6 contractors were involved in this tender process. Consulting engineers, the users, operational staff and the Port Engineer all had a say in this particular piece of equipment and were responsible for it being installed. I think we have to be satisfied with their professional advice on that subject.

2.2.2 Deputy G.C.L. Baudains:

Picking up on the last matter, Sir, with the professional advice and the excellence of this new piece of equipment - or so we are led to believe - could the Assistant Minister confirm that the previous piece of equipment, commissioned by the Harbour, was never used because the owners would not use it and it was dismantled as a waste of taxpayers' money? The previous first piece of equipment was, in fact, extremely reliable and could have been repaired for £2,000 but the department did not wish to follow that and instead commissioned something which has been extremely expensive and continues to malfunction.

Deputy A.J.H. Maclean:

I am led to believe that the previous piece of equipment had worn out as the Deputy rightly points out. The advice, as I said a moment ago, was from the consulting engineers and the users. I am also led to believe that the crews from the tankers that were docking did not find the mechanical process in place particularly efficient and they, themselves, were against using it. A number of individual organisations, and people, were consulted with regard to this piece of equipment and, as I said, it was decided by the previous Committee that it was the most appropriate option to take up at that particular time.